$\mathcal{A}$1

This application is related to application [**Serial No. ___/_____**], application no. 09/478,287, filed on January 5, 2000, entitled "Automatic Propagation of Circuit Information in a Communications Network," of which, Jin Huai is the inventor, with attorney docket number M-7607, and which describes a method of automatically detecting network topology and protection information. The aforementioned application is incorporated herein by reference, but is not admitted to be prior art.

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